

Virginia Beach Parks & Recreation

• A GUIDE TO •

# YOUTH AQUATIC PROGRAMS

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Take a swim at any of our recreation center swimming pools. We offer quality programs and activities for you to enjoy, including lap swimming, exercising, diving & fun special events. We welcome people of all ages & abilities. A Virginia Beach Recreation Center membership or day pass is required for all classes and activities.

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Virginia Beach Parks & Recreation is accredited by CAPRA, certifying agency of the National Recreation & Park Association.

# Preschool Swimming Lessons

## A few reminders:

- It is important to remember that preschool classes will not make children water safe.
- Parents who take children of the opposite sex under age 6 in the locker room are requested to respect the privacy of other patrons. Parents are encouraged to use assisted-care changing areas or handicapped bathrooms to attend to the needs of young children.
- Swim lessons will still be held during inclement weather; we have classroom activities during thunderstorms.

## Tiny Bobbers with Adult Guardian

### Age 1-2 with adult

A safe and fun introduction to the water for youth ages 1-2 to share with a participating adult guardian. The purpose of the course is to familiarize children with the water and teach swimming readiness skills. In addition, the course provides safety information for parents and teaches parents techniques they can use to help orient their children to the water. Water safety topics for the pool, home, beach and waterpark are also included. Note: This class is not intended to make children water safe.

### Paddler Age 3

Prerequisite: Children must be 3 by the first day of class, toilet trained, able to communicate needs and willing to separate from parent/guardian. Student to instructor ratio of 5:1.

**Preschool Aquatics Level 1:** Introduces basic aquatic skills, which children continue to build as they progress through Levels 2 and 3 of Preschool Aquatics and then Learn to Swim. Children start developing attitudes and safe practices around the water. Many skills are performed with assistance from the instructor.

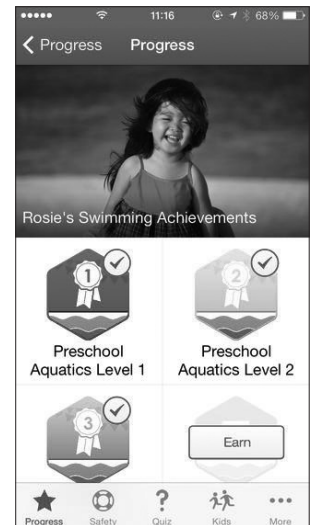
**Preschool Aquatics Level 2:** Further development of basic aquatic skills continues. Children begin to perform skills at a slightly more advanced level by practicing skills for a longer period of time or longer distances. This also marks the beginning of independent skills.

**Preschool Aquatics Level 3:** Additional guided practices help increase child's proficiency in performing previously learned skills by increasing repetitions, distances, times or levels of refinement. Skills are performed independently. At conclusion of Preschool Aquatics Level 3, most children are ready for Learn to Swim Level 2.

### Paddler Age 4&5

Prerequisite: Children must be 4 by the first day of class, toilet trained, able to communicate needs and willing to separate from parent/guardian. Student to instructor ratio of 6:1.

Preschool Aquatics Levels 1-3: Descriptions listed above.



## New Red Cross APP

Track progress, earn badges, and learn about water safety with this free app! Text SWIM to 90999 or search the iTunes store for "American Red Cross."

# American Red Cross Learn to Swim Classes Age 6-15

This swimming and water safety program teaches people of different ages and abilities how to be safe in, on or around the water. The program emphasizes water safety and skill development with an inclusive approach and covers the knowledge and skills needed for aquatic skill development.

Program highlights include:

- Thoroughly updated and revised program materials to reflect the latest science, including: Scientific Advisory Council (SAC) statements and advisories on many topics, including the Circle of Drowning Prevention and Chain of Drowning Survival, water competency, safe aquatic outings, water temperature and others.
- Realignment of progressions in the Learn to Swim courses

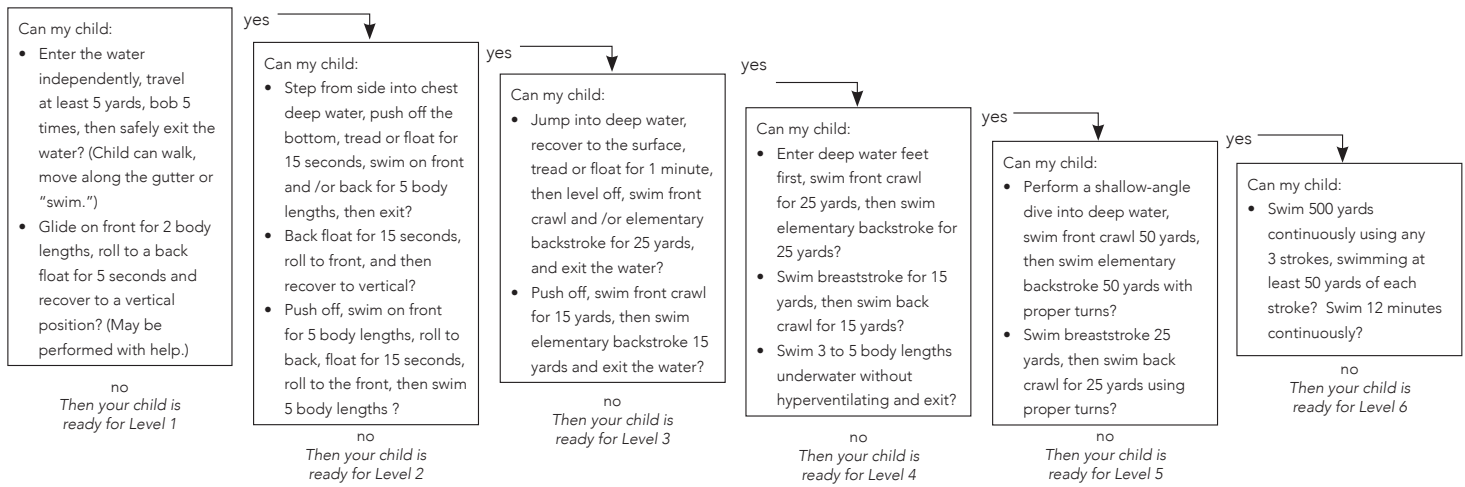
to correlate with the definition of water competency as established by Scientific Advisory Council (SAC).

- Updated biomechanics for swim strokes and starts.
- Additional information and inclusion strategies.
- Progress Report for every participant.
- ARC Achievement Cards upon the completion of each level.

## A few reminders:

- Parents may want to confirm what level your child is in at the end of the first class.
- Parents are encouraged to discuss your child's progress with the instructor before or after class.
- It is highly recommended that you bring your child to the pool to practice whenever possible.

## Which Learn to Swim Class is my child ready for?



## American Red Cross Learn to Swim Class Skills

### Level 1: Introduction to Water Skills

Introduction to basic skills as the foundation for future skills and water competency development.

- Enter and exit water independently using the ramp, steps or side
- Travel at least 5 yards, bobbing 5 times and then safely exit the water
- Open eyes underwater and retrieve submerged object
- Glide on front for at least, 2 body lengths
- Roll to a back float for 5 seconds and recover to a vertical position
- Combine arm and leg action on front and back
- Alternating and simultaneous arm and leg actions on front and back
- Use a life jacket

### Level 2: Fundamental Aquatic Skills

Builds on current skills and works toward gaining rudimentary propulsive skills on both front and back.

- Enter and exit water independently using the ramp, steps or side
- Step from the side into chest-deep water
- Fully submerge and hold breath, 10 seconds
- Bobbing, 10 times (in chest - deep water)
- Rotary breathing, 5 times
- Open eyes underwater and retrieve a submerged object, 3 times (in chest -deep water)
- Float on front 10 seconds and back 15 seconds
- Front and back glides, 2 body lengths
- Change direction of travel swimming on front or back
- Roll over from front to back, back to front
- Tread water using arm and leg actions, 15 seconds
- Swim on front and back using combined arm and leg actions
- Combined arm and leg actions on front and back, 5 body lengths

### Level 3: Stroke Development

Builds Level 2 skills through additional guided practice.

- Enter water by jumping from the side, fully submerge, then recover to the surface and return to the side
- Headfirst entry from the side in a sitting and kneeling position
- Bobbing while moving toward safety, 15 times
- Rotary breathing, 15 times
- Survival float, 30 seconds
- Back float, 1 minute
- Float on front and back
- Change from vertical to horizontal position on front and back
- Tread water, 1 minute
- Front crawl, 15 yards
- Push off in a streamlined position on front and begin flutter kicking, 3 to 5 body lengths
- Push off in a streamline on front position and begin dolphin kicking, 3 to 5 body lengths
- Breaststroke kick, 15 yards
- Elementary backstroke, 15 yards
- Scissors kick, 15 yards

### Level 4: Stroke Improvement

Develops confidence in the skills learned and improves other aquatic skills.

- Headfirst entry from side - compact and stride position
- Swim underwater 3 to 5 body lengths
- Feet first surface dive, submerging completely
- Survival swimming, 1 minute (in deep water)
- Open turns on front and back
- Tread water using 2 different kicks, 2 minutes
- Front crawl 25 yards
- Breaststroke, 15 yards
- Butterfly, 15 yards

- Push off in a streamline position on back and begin flutter kicking, 3 to 5 body lengths
- Push off in a streamline position on back and begin dolphin kicking, 3 to 5 body lengths
- Elementary backstroke, 25 yards
- Back crawl, 15 yards
- Sidestroke, 15 yards

## Level 5: Stroke Refinement

Provides further coordination and refinement of strokes.

- Shallow angle dive from the side
- Shallow angle dive, glide 2 to 3 body lengths and begin any front stroke
- Tuck surface dive
- Pike surface dive
- Front flip turn while swimming
- Backstroke flip turn while swimming
- Tread water, 5 minutes
- Tread water, using legs only, 2 minutes
- Front crawl, 50 yards
- Breaststroke 25 yard

## Level 6: Fitness Swimmer

Provides further coordination and refinement of strokes.

- Using equipment: pull buoys, fins, paddles, pace clock
- Cooper Swim Test (12-minute swim)
- Strokes: front crawl, elementary backstroke, back crawl, breaststroke, butterfly, sidestroke including turns for each of the strokes
- Setting up an exercise program
- Calculating target heart rate

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## Specialty Classes & Clinics

### Clinics Ages 6 – 18 depending on program

Clinics are offered throughout the year for backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, freestyle, springboard diving, swim league prep and water polo.

Prerequisites:

- Stroke Clinics: Swimmers must be able to swim one length of the pool using a good basic crawl stroke with rhythmic breaths. Swimmers must also be familiar with the stroke taught.
- Springboard Diving: Divers must be deep water safe and able to dive head first off the diving board.
- Water Polo: Participants must be comfortable swimming in deep water.

### Private Lessons

Age 3 & up

Learn or refine your swimming skills with individualized, one-on-

one instruction. Lessons are offered in 30-minute increments. Private specialty lessons also available (Lifeguard training prep, triathlon prep, etc.)

### Introduction to Water Polo

Age 7 - 10

With an emphasis on player development and fun, this intro is designed for youth with little polo experience. We expose the players to basic polo skills and a team environment.

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## Competitive Youth Leagues

### Introduction to Dive League

Age 7-17

With an emphasis on diver development and fun, this intro is designed for youth with no competitive diving experience. We will expose divers to basic competitive diving skills and a team environment. Participants must be deep water safe and able to go head first off the diving board.

### Dive League

Age 7-17

Emphasis is placed on diver development and fun in a low-key competitive environment. Participants will compete in age groups based on their age on the first day of practice. Season runs March - May. Registration begins in December.

**Eligibility:** Participants must

- Be deep water safe
- Perform front dive with approach and hurdle
- Front somersault
- Back dive with back take off

### Water Polo

Age 10-17

Tired of swimming laps and want a different way to challenge your swimming skills? Want to learn how to play water polo or build upon your current polo skills? Water Polo League places emphasis on learning correct techniques and rules in a fun, low-key competitive environment. Season runs March - May. Registration begins in December.

**Eligibility swim:**

- Swim 50 meters/yards using front crawl, with head above water
- Tread water for 5 minutes

### Winter Swim League

Age 6-17

**Eligibility Swim:** Swimmers must be registered in swim league prior to the eligibility swim and can attend either eligibility swim dates for their site. Season runs November - February. Registration begins in August.

**Swimmers (10 yrs & under):**

- Must be able to swim 25 meters/yards using a good front crawl with face in water demonstrating rhythmic breathing



(either to side or forward)

- Swimmers also must be able to swim 25 meters/yards back crawl

#### Swimmers (11 yrs & up):

- Must be able to swim 50 meters/yards using a good front crawl with face in water demonstrating rhythmic breathing (either to side or forward)
- Swimmers also must be able to swim 50 meters/yards back crawl

## Preseason Conditioning

Age 6 - 18

Get ready for your swim season. We offer conditioning classes for both high school and summer league. Emphasis is placed on proper stroke technique for all the competitive strokes, starts and turn.

Prerequisite: Swimmers must be able to complete minimum requirements. See online description for more information.

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## Advanced Water Safety Classes

### Junior Lifeguard

Age 10 - 14

Looking for the on-ramp to Lifeguarding? Have you taken American Red Cross Learn to Swim classes or participated on a swim team? Becoming a Junior Lifeguard is the next step. Classroom and pool instruction are included to provide youth with the knowledge required to become a Junior Lifeguard. Elementary forms of water rescue and skills are introduced and practiced to assist lifeguard staff. Participants swimming skills must exceed Level 4 of the American Red Cross Learn to Swim program. After completion, students will be eligible to volunteer as a Junior Lifeguard.

#### Eligibility Swim:

- Front crawl 25 meters
- Breaststroke 25 meters using a pull, kick and glide sequence
- Treading water for 1 minute
- Back float for 30 seconds or 25 meters elementary backstroke or backstroke
- Submerge feet first and swim under water for 10 feet

## Junior Swim Instructor

Age 11 - 16

Learn to be a Junior Swim Instructor! The Junior Swim Instructor course offers training for youth with swimming skills that exceed Level 4 of the American Red Cross Learn to Swim Program. Classes include hands-on instruction in how to assist a Water Safety Instructor. The supervisor and you will review key skills and abilities required of a good instructor. You will also gain exposure to the organization and paperwork needed to conduct lessons. Once the participant completes the course, they will be eligible to volunteer for future sessions of the Learn to Swim program as a Junior Swim Instructor.

## Lifeguard Training

Age 15 & up

Designed to teach swimming pool lifeguarding skills and knowledge needed to prevent and respond to aquatic emergencies.

#### Prerequisites:

- Proof of age
- Pass the Eligibility swim test:
  - Swim 300 yards
  - Swim 20 yards, surface dive, retrieve a 10 lb object and carry back to wall in less than 1min. 40 sec.
  - Tread water for 2 minutes using legs only

#### Requirements for certification:

- Attend all class sessions
- Pass written exam
- Pass all water, CPR, First Aid and AED skills and tests

## Lifeguarding Instructor

Age 17 & up

Trains instructor candidates to teach American Red Cross Lifeguarding, CPR/PR, First Aid, AED, Bloodborne Pathogens, and Water Safety courses.

#### Prerequisites:

- 17 years of age or older
- Possess current basic level certification in Lifeguarding, First Aid, CPR, and AED
- Pass pre-course, which includes, lifeguarding, swimming, First Aid, CPR, and AED skills
- Successfully complete online introduction to course after passing eligibility

#### Certification requirements:

- Attend and actively participate in all course sessions
- Successfully complete class activities, including required practice teaching assignments
- Demonstrate instructor-level skill competency in all skills and scenarios
- Pass the final written exam with a minimum grade of 80%

## Water Safety Instructor (WSI)

Age 16 & up

Trains students to teach American Red Cross level swim classes. Students should be able to perform the following swimming skills taught at Level 4: crawl, breast, side, elementary back, and butterfly. Text material required after meeting eligibility

**Prerequisites:** Pass a water skills test.

#### Requirements for certification:

- Attend all class sessions
- Pass all practice teaching sessions
- Pass a water skills test
- Pass a written exam

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## Blended Learning Now Available!

Check out our Blended learning offerings. Blended learning combines online knowledge acquisition and in-person skill assessment in and out of the water. Blended learning is available for the following classes: Lifeguard Training and Water Safety Instructor.

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## FAQ's about swim lessons

### How can you help?

- Have your child ask the instructor which skills they should review, and then make it possible for your child to practice these skills at home or at local aquatic facility.
- Praise your child and help them be proud of the efforts and accomplishments toward being a safety-conscious and skilled swimmer.
- Understand that children develop swimming skills at different rates. Avoid putting pressure on achievement; encourage your child to enjoy swim lessons and take pride in personal successes.
- Remember, not completing a level the first time, or even the second time, means that there are important skills that need to be improved upon and strengthened.

### How can you build on your child's swimming experience?

- Give your child plenty of opportunity to develop strength, practice skills and increase their comfort level in the water by taking them to a local aquatic facility.
- Encourage your child, when at play, to try the skills they are learning in lessons.
- Stay interested in your child's progress. Ask your child to show you a skill learned in swim lessons and incorporate the skill into a game to play in the pool.

### How do you evaluate the skills that my child should complete in their level to move to the next level?

- All of our instructors are certified American Red Cross Water Safety Instructors. During their training they are taught how to evaluate every skill for each level.
- Each level has certain skills that are evaluated and as the levels progress the refinement of the skill will continue to advance.
- All students achieve mastery of a skill at different times, which could be due to coordination, age or length of time devoted to practicing that skill.
- We do not emphasize that a child passes or fails. We focus on the mastery of the skills that are required to complete a level.

- We encourage parents to review the listing of all the skills that are required for each level.

### What can I work on with my child if they are not old enough for Learn to Swim programs?

- We recommend trying the Tiny Bobbers for age 1-2. Paddler 1 for 3 year olds and Paddler 2 for children ages 4-5.
- If your child has completed either of these courses and you feel they need to continue in their progress but have not yet turned five years old, we recommend that you continue to keep them active in the water. This can be achieved by having some pool time with parents, playing and practicing the skills they have learned.
- Another option is to schedule Private Lessons for your child, if the child is three years old. The instructor will focus on whatever skills you would like to accomplish during the private 30 minute session for a fee. If you are interested in a Private Lesson, contact an Aquatic Supervisor for more details.

### What should I do if my child is ill and cannot come to class?

- If you know that your child will be unable to attend lessons one week prior to the session starting, please notify the Aquatics office. We will attempt to find another class at a later date or possibly be able to refund your fee.
- Please do not bring your child to lessons if they are ill. For the safety of the other children in lessons and also for the well-being of your child, keep them at home. Please notify us if your child will be absent but understand that we cannot conduct a make-up class.
- Check in with instructors if you've missed a class to make sure your child has not missed any major skill components.
- We do not have the ability to do make-up lessons due to the absence of your child, but we do offer private lessons for an additional fee.

### What's after Level 6?

- Take a Junior Instructor or Junior Lifeguard class. After completion, students may begin volunteering.

**FIND FULL PROGRAM DATES, TIMES AND LOCATIONS ONLINE AT [VBGOV.COM/PARKS](http://VBGOV.COM/PARKS)**